

Working 9 To 5? Prepare For Extinction

Source: Jason Wingard, Forbes.com, August 27, 2024

Reid Hoffman's prediction that nine-to-five jobs will be extinct by 2034 caused a major stir when [this video](#) of the LinkedIn cofounder resurfaced on social media. Forecasting an extinction-level event for the job market—a chilling claim from the man who predicted the rise of social media in 1997—made for a viral tweet and countless click-worthy headlines.

“The Gig Economy Revolution is coming, and it's bigger than you think. Within a decade, 50% of the US population will be freelancers,” Hoffman said. He predicts the rapid development of AI will profoundly reshape how we work; rather than working for one company for many years, workers should prepare to work many jobs across multiple industries.

He's far from the only one raising this alarm on this. The World Economic Forum has forecasted that AI will replace [85 million jobs](#) globally by 2025. But also that AI will create 89 million new jobs.

These startling predictions deserve our immediate attention and action. A proactive outlook will prepare workers for doors to close while new ones open.

First, let's consider that [thirty-eight percent](#) of the American workforce is already freelancing, to some extent, and many made the shift by choice. Many, too, are thriving. The [American Opportunity Survey](#), conducted by McKinsey, revealed that freelancers tend to be “far more optimistic, both about their own futures and the outlook for the economy, than the average American worker.”

People who have already chosen to eschew full-time work for self-employment and freelancing tend to have certain skills and characteristics that make them well-equipped for the gig economy. They're flexible self-starters who can juggle multiple projects and managers. They know how to market a personal brand and valuable offerings—and how to position their skills in relation to a company's specific needs.

Freelancers and gig workers are almost always looking for work, so they're constantly looking for ways to improve upon their skills and offerings.

That's why freelancers and gig workers are increasingly preferable to hiring managers: They're the most responsive to a rapidly evolving market.

So how do you—as someone who might be happy with your full-time job and concerned about its impending “extinction”—prepare to not only survive but thrive in a shift to gig work?

There are two key recommendations to start thinking about:

1. New skills for a new age; and
2. New networks for new experiences.

These are no small lift, especially when juggling full-time work and life responsibilities, like parenting. Education can be time-consuming and expensive. And, traditional institutions are loathe to respond quickly to changes in the job market. I wrote about this in *The College Devaluation Crisis: Market Disruption, Diminishing ROI, and an Alternative Future of Learning*.

In my book, I also present case studies (three of which are presented below) of newer education platforms that make it easy to learn new skills, network, and find new opportunities.

These platforms demonstrate the importance of evolving with technology, looking beyond the traditional resume to upskill in direct response to evolving technology, and amassing new networks and experience.

And, they make it easy with self-paced, online learning and built-in networks. Workers who want to be proactive, right now, should start here:

Google

Does your boss want you to start incorporating analytics into your weekly marketing reports?

Workers can take advantage of new expectations at the current jobs to develop new skills that will increase their hirability in the future.

And [Grow with Google](#) has a class for that. Employers are turning to Grow with Google’s online, self-paced courses covering IT support, data analytics, project management, user-experience design, and Android development to upskill their employees. Individuals can take advantage of those opportunities to develop new skills that could make them both invaluable to their current employer and enticing to new ones.

Choose between individual courses or a self-paced program with Google Career Certificates that teach a new skillset and prepare students for high-paying fields like

cybersecurity, data analytics, business intelligence, digital marketing and e-commerce, IT support, project management, and UX design.

“Our goal isn’t to train people,” said Lisa Gevelber, Managing Director of Grow with Google, in an interview with [Strada Education Foundation](#). “It’s to give people real economic mobility, which means they have to be successful in these jobs.”

Since launching in 2017, 10 million workers have taken Grow with Google Courses and 200,000 have obtained a Google Career Certificate.

By closely working with employers, Grow with Google and Google Career Certificates provide that economic mobility with training that aligns with the needs of those employers. Adding one of these to your resume could open doors to jobs and gigs you haven’t even considered yet.

General Assembly

Shifting to a gig economy means workers will have many different jobs across industries. If you’re looking to expand into the tech industry, meet people doing all kinds of different work, and find your place among them, General Assembly is a great place to start for both education and networking.

General Assembly offers boot camps in software engineering, UX Design, Data Analytics, and Data Science. These are great if you’re ready to commit to a new career path. But their workshops and events are also a doorway to a network of tech workers who support and learn from their peers. Their alumni network is over 110,000 strong, many of them working at top tech companies. Check out their free events like “Your Path to UX Design,” and info sessions on their various boot camps and workshops.

It’s also a great resource if you want to try something completely new. Their workshops consist of two three-hour sessions that include hands-on practice with foundation skills like UX design with Figma and AI for workplace productivity. These low-commitment classes can help you decide if you’re ready to jump into more training or try something else.

ZipRecruiter

Forty percent of employers say their employees are lacking the skills they need from them. That’s one reason so many managers are already turning to freelancers. But some of them are upskilling their employees, instead.

ZipRecruiter is one of many platforms that's stepping up on multiple levels here. Working to ease the friction between job seekers and hiring companies, ZipRecruiter focuses on skills—both in hiring and seeking opportunities. When you find an interesting opportunity, ZipRecruiter makes recommendations on what skills you could add to your resume to improve your chances of getting hired. Then, thanks to partners including edX, Coursera, Skillshare, and Udacity, ZipRecruiter directs you to online resources for obtaining those skills and certifications.

ZipRecruiter is a great place to be if you're looking ahead to a gig future. They provide valuable information about what companies are looking for and how to better align and expand your experience to fit those opportunities. Just browsing the site for interesting freelance opportunities can give you a good feel for what's out there now and how you might position yourself for future gig searches. And while you're at it, you can take a class in something new.

The AI revolution has already begun, and job losses will accelerate. In just April of this year, [800 job cuts](#) were attributed to AI.

You have a choice. You can worry, you can panic, or you can take steps to embrace the opportunities that will emerge from this shift.

There is a lot we can't definitively predict about the future of work, but one thing is for sure: workers must adapt. Those who are committed to pivoting and evolving will continue to thrive.